

Farewell to the Southern Cross - our conference blog part 4



19th September 2018

For those of us who hail from the northern hemisphere, it has been a delight to gather under the southern cross for the past few days. Although today is our last at this year's conference, there is no let-up in the frantic pace of the event. Another early breakfast and an 0845 start, this time for the loss prevention workshop.



Amongst a series of great presentations, we were treated to a comprehensive overview of marine risks in South Africa. The country certainly has its challenges spanning extremes of weather to extremes of behaviour from some of its population. Our speaker highlighted the rising tide of cargo hijacking. Televisions and cellphones were being targeted as easy items to sell-on, but so were metals, chemicals and oils. Gangs were becoming highly sophisticated and, worryingly, have even started to use electronic jamming technology and hacking processes to gain intelligence on cargo shipments.

Another speaker in the same session made us all sit up and listen. Shipping was becoming safer and more than 700 vessel audits and inspections were performed every single day; despite this, he said, on average three sailors were killed and 30 were injured each day of the year. One ship was lost every two days and around \$50 million was paid out in claims daily. Sobering stuff. In the sumptuous surroundings of the Western Cape, we shouldn't forget those at the coal-face of our industry who work so hard, often in trying circumstances, to feed, clothe, entertain and energise our world.

After lunch it was onto the final workshop of the conference. The president's session focused on Dieter Berg's pet topic of digital initiatives. Fresh from a recent trip to Silicon Valley, Dieter has become an evangelist for digitisation in marine insurance and seems to be on an extremely worthwhile mission to educate us all. Blockchain, internet of things, disruptive technologies, global trade digitisation and other "new world" terms were bandied around liberally. We learnt a lot.

Excitement reached fever pitch (ok, we are exaggerating slightly) as the conference convened the IUMI Council to formally elect its next president. Richard Turner as the sole nominee was formally crowned president and took the baton for the coming two, or maybe four, years. Congratulations to Richard.

As one president begins his term, so the outgoing president steps aside. After four highly

productive years, we said goodbye to Dieter Berg. His unique, friendly and energetic style was thoroughly appreciated and he will be missed.

So, as IUMI 2018 winds down, huge thanks go to the event organisers and, in particular, the South African Insurance Association. The last hurrah is a gala dinner at Cape Town's famous castle tonight.

When dinner is over, it's farewell to IUMI 2018, it's farewell to Dieter Berg and it's farewell to the Western Cape and, for those of us heading north, it's farewell to the Southern Cross as well.